

EMBODIMENT

The place of the body in psychotherapy

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Part I. The background of body-psychotherapy

1. Roots: from psychological analysis to psychophysical synthesis
The integrative work of Pierre Janet on motility and sensibility

In the last decades of the previous century, before Freud and Breuer had published their first papers on what was to become psychoanalysis, Pierre Janet and Charles Richet were publishing their first studies on psychophysical aspects of neurosis at the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris. They were studying the diaphragmatic block and observing the fact that emotional disturbance in neurotic process was accompanied by specific irregularities in the breathing rhythm. Janet noticed the inhibited movements of his patients, and worked with massage and exercises to facilitate the recovery of motility. He introduced two fundamental concepts that of psychological force, which was a measure of the energetic level of the patient, his level of vital expression, or emotional charge, and secondly the concept of psychological tension, which for Janet was a question of the patient's ability to organize his life, what we would now call his structural level of ability to integrate or synthesize his experiences.

Janet's thinking was through and through psycho physical. He understood the formative process as an organismic process in which mind and body were constantly interactive, and in which psychosomatic and somatopsychic processes were inevitably interlinked. I have described his important contributions much more fully in my article on „Awakening sensibility, restoring motility (Boadella,1997)

1. The energy of drives and the body- ego: cathexis ,and catharsis
Organic bases in psycho-analysis.

When Freud developed his thinking on the energy of drives, he understood the drives as physiological processes, related to sexuality and aggression. His understanding of libido was of a current of excitation that was capable of charging special body zones, the erogenous zones that were central to psycho-energetic development: the mouth, the anus, and the genitals. His concept of the Id, adopted from Georg Groddeck, was of an instinctual reservoir of psychic energy, rooted in the organic foundations of the drives, an emotional energy which could be discharged in catharsis. Freud's concept of the ego was also essentially a somatic concept, since he understood the ego to be first and foremost a bodily ego, representing the projection of a surface (of the body) onto a surface (of the brain).. Freud's concept of the somatic basis of the ego was later extended by Alexander Lowen, when he described the two primary functions of the ego to be the coordination of motility, (the organization of voluntary movements), and the coordination of perceptions (the ordering of sense data into meaningful patterns)

2. Body-schema and body image: grounds of embodiment
Motility and boundaries in the work of Wernicke and Schilder.

Contemporary with Pierre Janet, the great German neurophysiologist Wernicke, was describing at the end of the last century, three divisions of the psyche, which he called the autopsyché, (the part of the psyche dealing with the self, and the inner organ sensations); the allopsyché, (the part of the psyche dealing with perceptions of the other and of the outer world); and the somatopsyché, (the part of the psyche dealing with motility and motoric intentionality.).

Wernicke's work formed one of the early understandings of the importance of body schema and body image to the development of the self.

The body schema relates to the subconscious patterns of motoric adjustment and postural attitude, which are laid down partly genetically, and partly by our earliest experiences in being handled, and in developing our motoric skills. The body image is related to our conscious awareness of the body, and our beliefs and feelings about it. Body schema is physiologically rooted, even when the physiology has itself adapted to certain environmental pressures. Body image is psychologically rooted, but rests on the basis of the body schema, in such a way that if the body schema is improved the body image can benefit. Thus every psycho-neurosis is complemented by a physio-neurosis. Or in the words of Wilhelm Reich, a psychoneurosis is physiologically anchored through muscle spasms and breathing disturbances.

Whereas the body-schema concepts were developed particularly by Henry Head in England, the understanding of body-image was enriched by the creative work of Paul Schilder, a Viennese psychiatrist, who understood the body within the context of the libidinal insights of psychoanalysis, and who was one of the teachers of Wilhelm Reich. In phenomenological philosophy, the body image concept was also developed by Husserl. Husserl proposed a science of the body image which he called „somatology“, but a generation later Merleau Ponty was to move the attention back to the body schema, showing in his model of embodied intentionality, that consciousness perception and cognition are dependent on subconscious motoric and postural patterns, muscle tone, and breathing rhythms, that are part of the body schema. The body schema is not laid down unchangeably for all time, but can develop when we learn new somatic skills, or when emotional traumas that have blocked somatic development can be worked through, and new somatic learning at muscular, postural, and visceral levels can occur.

Georg Groddeck, the father of psychosomatic medicine in Germany, understood the importance of the psycho-physical connectedness very early on, and was working with massage, movement, and breathing in parallel to his work on the symbolic content of neurotic expression. His concept of the id, which was prior to Freud's, was wider than that of psychoanalysis, and was more a concept of bodymind (Leib-seele) than one aspect of the tripartite psyche, as it became for Freud. George Downing has pointed out that Groddeck identified at least three distinct forms of bodily defence, defences which Downing calls counter-mobilisation, chronic holding, and respiratory deadness. Downing points out that before Reich and Ferenczi, Groddeck also recognised and worked with the importance of negative transference. Groddeck was a direct inspiration for both Sandor Ferenczi, and Viktor von Weizsäcker.

4. The moving body: bio-analysis and the active method
The revolution of Sandor Ferenczi

Grodder exerted a deep influence on Sandor Ferenczi, the Hungarian psychoanalyst who was part of Freud's inner circle. Ferenczi became aware that the psychoanalytic technique where the client lay on the couch, and was encouraged to free associate, but discouraged from motoric expression, was too restrictive for many clients. Ferenczi began to pay attention to the how of the client's movements and postural states, that is he complemented psychoanalysis, the study of the mind, with bio-analysis, a study of the body. He encouraged his clients to become more expressive, and to be more physically active in the session. Downing writes: „Acts of the body are now seen as a potential means of revealing what is hidden, rather than as a form of evasion..Ferenczi's work with the body enabled him to work much more deeply than in a normal verbal-analytic process with deep regression, and with re-experiencing traumatic events at a somatic-e,motional level..Ferenczi wrote: „The memory remains fixed in the body, and only there can it be awakened“ (Ferenczi 1955,262, quoted by Downing). Ferenczi's technical innovations were direct precursors of the work with the body by Wilhelm Reich

5. The expressive language of the body: psychic contact and vegetative current
Wilhelm Reich: from character-analysis to vegetotherapy

Wilhelm Reich followed the red thread of the energy of drives, from the earlier Freudian model, and in studying the patterns of libidinal excitation in his patients, began to relate the psychodynamic roots of neurotic restrictions with the disturbances he found in their adult sexuality. This led to a deep understanding of the orgasm function, as a whole person expression, or in disturbance as a part-person expression, as well as to the understanding of the energetic balance or imbalance within the vegetative nervous system. Psychic contact, which was a measure of a person's ability to relate to himself and to others, was found to be dependent on vegetative liveliness, an unblocked emotionality founded on motoric, gastrointestinal, cardiovascular and respiratory balance. The relation between psychic contact and vegetative current, is parallel to the relationship between body image and body schema.

Reich moved from the analysis of the characterological resistances, to the analysis of the somatic defence patterns, which was a more deeply effective way of affecting the balance in the vegetative nervous system. From 1934 onwards Reich called his work „vegetotherapy“ for this reason.

6. Bodies in dialogue: the bi-personal field and the ground of the body
Early relationships: the work of the British Object Relations School

The work of Sandor Ferenczi was the beginnings of what was to become object relations theory, the study of the relationship between the subject, and the object of his longings for attachment. Object relations theory describes the patterns of bi-personal dialogue that develop between infant and mother, and later in the triadic situation of child, mother and father. It is obvious that in the first eighteen months of so of life much of the

communication within the family is non verbal. Verbal communication develops on the basis of non verbal communication, just as the cognitive body image develops on the basis of the precognitive body schema. The British object relations school, headed by Fairbairn and Guntrip, emphasised the dialogical nature of the primary relationships. Michael Balint who also belonged to this school described the importance in therapy that the therapist was able to translate between the two language systems, verbal and non verbal, just as an empathic mother helps the child by her capacity for attunement, to ground his cognitions in his somatic experiences. If she fails to do this she may create classical double bind situations which are one of the origin points for neurosis.

Donald Winnicott, who stood also in this tradition, encouraged the unfolding of inhibited movements in his sessions. Winnicott was the first psychologist to use the word grounding as a way of emphasising the importance of reconnecting a client to his body. In deep birthing work with clients, Winnicott used the word „reptation“ to describe the birthing movements he saw in some of his clients.

In 1951 John Bowlby, another English Object relations theorist, published his study for the World Health Organization, Maternal Care and Infant Health, which was a forerunner of his later development of attachment theory. Attachment theory leans very strongly on ethology for its understanding of infant-parent bonding, in other words it derives its insights primarily from the studies of non verbal communication, ie from somatic communication and motoric intentionality. At exactly the same period Wilhelm Reich initiated his Infant Research Centre to study the conditions for emotional health and neurosis prevention between infants and mothers

Reich's focus on neurosis prevention had its roots in the nineteen twenties, and his emphasis on energetic resonance, and what would later be called attunement, between parent and baby, as the basis for healthy contact, which would lay the foundations for mature contact later in sexuality and love relationships, was continued in his Scandinavian period, and all three of his closest Scandinavian colleagues specialised in the area of deeper understanding of the somato-psychic roots of infant-parent bonding: Ola Raknes wrote a book called „Free Growth“, Nic Waal became the foremost child psychiatrist in Norway, and Tage Philipsen wrote a two volume book on „Love-life, natural and unnatural“, tracing love-disturbances in adolescence and adulthood, back to disturbed bonding patterns in infancy.

In the last two decades the work of Daniel Stern in infant research has developed a concept of four primary senses of the self, three of which are non-verbal, and developed in the pre-linguistic period, and the fourth of which, the verbal self, rests on the other three. All four senses of self, as understood by Stern, continue to develop and to be active, throughout all phases of life.

7. The mind of the body and the body of the mind: the two faces of psychosomatic medicine

Two different kinds of psychosomatic medicine developed in the wake of psychoanalysis. The first, led by Franz Alexander, was a verbal approach to the body, in which psychosomatic symptoms could be interpreted in terms of their psychodynamic content. The second, led by Viktor von Weizsäcker, a close friend of Georg Groddeck's was a more holistic understanding of the total body mind integrity. Weizsäcker became

the founder of anthropological medicine, a tradition which influenced Thure von Uexküll, the father of modern holistic psychosomatic medicine in Germany, who has pioneered the necessity not only to gain insights through verbal analysis, but to gain new experiences of the body, to reform our subjective anatomy. This emphasis on subjective anatomy is de facto a move to reach the roots of the body image, always disturbed in psychosomatic processes, in the body schema, where developmental failures can be gradually overcome through new forms of transformative re-embodiment in a psycho-physical therapy. The two faces of psychosomatic medicine, are the approach from the mind, looking at the body, interpreting it, understanding it, and analysing it, and the approach from the body, experiencing it, feeling it, sensing it, and grasping through new somatic learning processes the energetics, and psychodynamics of a problem.

8. The body trap and the keys of the armour: medical orgonomy and its critique The American legacy of Wilhelm Reich.

In 1939 Wilhelm Reich moved to America. In America he taught a new generation of doctors, many of whom had no psychoanalytic background. They were impressed by the effectiveness of vegetotherapy, but began to lose the characteranalytic understanding of neurosis. Reich himself in this period became more impatient with the therapeutic process, and critical of his earlier psychoanalytical roots.

Whereas Reich had nevertheless always emphasised the importance of never pressing on tense muscles in order to massage away neurotic blockages, until and unless one understood the emotional function of the block, and only when and if one had emotional contact with this function as a therapist, there were signs that this new generation of American therapists were doing exactly that. In 1961 I published a critical article with the title „The Breakthrough into the vegetative realm“, quoting from many of the case-studies from this period, and illustrating how the contact functions that were so crucial in the foundations of vegetotherapy were being forgotten, overlooked or ignored. The result was a reductive mechanisation of therapy into a purely energetic-release process, with no verbal integration, no relational interactions being explored, and little connection to remembered experiences in some cases. Reich himself predicted that his therapy would become distorted in such ways, and warned specifically against such tendencies.

9. Grounding the body and body-reading Bioenergetic analysis: its strengths and weaknesses

Three American doctors who trained with Reich in the early nineteen forties, William Walling, John Pierrakos, and Alexander Lowen, became the joint founders of bioenergetic analysis, a therapeutic method founded in 1956 that built upon vegetotherapy introduced a number of innovations and differences. Firstly, bioenergetic analysis introduced the use of the standing position in addition to the position lying on the couch which Reich had inherited from Freud. This extended the range of options in working with posture. Secondly the importance of the ego functions was emphasised, with the use of stress exercises as forms which a client could use on his own at home, and so increase his sense of self-responsibility. Thirdly bioenergetic analysis returned to the

character-analytic roots of Reich, and developed and deepened these character insights, particularly refining and extending the description of the physical dynamics of characterstructure.

Bioenergetic analysis shared with the American orgonomists a strong emphasis on the value of regressive cathartic work, and the tendency to induce this by provocative means that were induced by the activity of the therapist seeking to break down the armouring of the client, whether by pressurised forms of touch, or by high charge expressive exercises, or by the stress positions. The tendency is, in such an approach, to neglect the contact functions which Reich had emphasised, and for the therapy to become too much of a one person psychology, neglecting the relational aspects of therapy, and the resonances within the bipersonal field.

In 1961 I had been one of the first to welcome the renewed emphasis on character and diagnosis, but in 1974 in several articles within *Energy and Character*, I was critical of the one-sidedness developing in some practitioners of bioenergetic analysis. These criticisms were endorsed by Stanley Keleman, at that time a Senior Trainer in Bioenergetic Analysis, and quarter of a century later they were taken up within the second generation of bioenergetic therapists, as will be seen below.

10. The formative body: pulsation and shapes of containment

Somatic process work, and somatic developmental psychology

Stanley Keleman is one of the most creative of the somatic psychologists this century. His background lies in the attitudinal psychology of Nina Bull, in the Adlerian approach which had focussed early on on organ neuroses, and on the formative process of shaping one's own life; in the functional integration of Moshe Feldenkrais, and in the bioenergetic analysis of Lowen and Pierrakos. Keleman formed his Centre for Energetic Studies in California in the late nineteen sixties, and soon began to differentiate his work from the bioenergetic tradition.

Firstly he kept the function of the human relationship as central in his therapeutic work, and spoke of this as a somatic resonance between persons, thus deepening out understanding both of transference and of the real relationship taking place between therapist and client. Secondly he moved away from the overdevelopment of catharsis, and emphasised the importance of containment in the handling of emotionality, and the value of subtle forms of pulsation and lower levels of charge. In a crucial article published in *Energy and Character* in 1974 on *The Cathartic Body and the Formative Body*, he developed principles of guided self-transformation which led to a form of work with the individual which he called „somatic process work“. It is less interested in quantities of energetic expression, than in qualities of self-organization, but his work is deeply interactive, and the qualities of guidance are elicited from deep work with patterns of motoric intentionality, unfolded organically, rather than induced from outside by provocative touch in the style of classical bioenergetic analysis.

11. Body,soul and self : integrating the life streams.

Bioynthesis: forward to fundamentals in body psychotherapy

Biosynthesis is the form of body psychotherapy that I developed, following Francis Mott, in the early nineteen seventies. Biosynthesis has the following characteristics among other within which may be found some differences from bioenergetic analysis:

1. All possible body positions are used, not just standing and lying down.
2. Stress positions involving pain are not used, as pain creates contraction and drives a person over their limits
3. A great variety of postural positions and expressive exercises are used to provide new experiences for the client. We call these „structure works“. On the other hand great importance is attached to the recognizing, supporting and eliciting of micro movements of intentionality within the client's own process, and in unfolding these into intensely person rhythms of motility and expression.
4. Whilst catharsis is possible when ripe, and when character-appropriate, equal importance is given to containment functions and the formative process.
5. Regression is permitted only when it is benign and when there is good therapeutic rapport. The function of regression is seen as returning to a time in the past when something was incompleted, and furthering the completion. Regression is thus in the service of progression.
6. Neurosis is understood as the inhibition of action, following Laborit. Helping the client to recognise, develop and unfold appropriate actions is a key motive in therapy.
7. Everything that happens in the therapeutic field is a function of the relationship. Transference and countertransference are crucial processes that need to be recognised. They have complements in the somatic resonances between client and therapist. The real relationship between therapist and client, offering non neurotic possibilites, has to be distinguished from and freed from the transference relationship, dominated by neurotic conditioning.
8. Character patterns are seen as colors of hurt, that is tendencies within us, rather than stereotyped structures into which we can be fitted. Thus the bioenergetic characterology of five principal structures, identifiable by their bodily characteristics, is seen as a gross over-simplification, and an impediment to the development of a differentiated process understanding of the person.
9. The potential for health in the client has to be recognized beneath his character pathology. The resources and essential qualities of the client represent the well springs of the healing possibilities coming from within, and these must be

recognized so that the therapeutic process does not become one of adapting the client to the therapist's ideals of health.

A more detailed presentation of the biosynthesis approach is given in Part II below.

12. The body as adjunct: language and exercises

Deficits in psychoanalysis: the return of the body as shadow

In Lindau in 1993 the largest conference of psychoanalysts in Europe took place with the theme „The body in psychotherapy“. The sense that one forms when reviewing the level of description offered in most of the presentations described there, is that the analysts were aware of the fact that a failed sense of embodiment was troubling many of their clients, and of the need in some way to remedy this. Lacking direct means within their own tradition to do this, and blocked by the over strict interpretation of their own abstinence principle, which was taken to mean an absolute taboo on touch between therapist and client, they had no alternative but to treat the body as an adjunct to psychotherapy, and to adopt a dual track policy which supported parallel or successive treatments, analytical therapy of a verbal nature, plus non-analytical and non verbal experience in one of the somatic therapies. What happened to the split transference in such a process is not described to my knowledge. Finally the body had regained the recognition of the analysts, that it existed, but as something extra, an appendage, an afterthought, the shadow that needed to have a somatic therapist throw a little light upon it.

13 .Body-awareness: basic experiences of being in the world

The legacy of Elsa Gindler and its modern applications.

In the same decade in which Reich was developing Character analysis, Elsa Gindler a movement teacher in Berlin, was developing her system of experiential body-awareness, which was to form the basis for the later evolution of the system of sensory awareness, by her student, Charlotte Selver. Gindler was the teacher of a member of the Berlin Dance Company, Elsa Lindenburg, who became the second wife of Wilhelm Reich. Through Elsa Lindenburg, Elsa Gindler exercised an important influence on the development of Reich's Vegetotherapy. Whereas Vegetotherapy was strongly focused around the relationship between strong emotions such as anger, fear, sadness, and pleasure, the body awareness teachings of Gindler were more related to the vitality affects described later by Daniel Stern, and to the process of awareness of inner and outer rhythms of breathing, movement, and subtler states of feeling. Many body-awareness systems developed in the wake of Gindler, including the breath-therapy of Ilse Middendorff, and the functional relaxation system developed by Marianne Fuchs, to mention just two.

One advantage of sensory awareness, and the tuning into breathing and states of muscular tone, is that aspects of body image come more into focus, and in so far as the sensory awareness is led into motoric awareness, as happened in the work of Gindler, the body schema on which the body image is in part based, can be modified, developed, and

reeducated. The limitation of this work, as with the functional integration system of Moshe Feldenkrais, or the postural work of Matthias Alexander, is that these systems are not psychodynamically oriented, and furthermore are not equipped to handle strong affective states which may be responsible for the defective breathing, motoric, or awareness states. What they do, as far as they can go, is very good, but their limitation is in relation to the emotionality that they cannot handle, or even in subtle ways learn to avoid.

In recent years the importance of body- awareness has been re-discovered, after half a century of neglect, by some members of the psychoanalytic direction, who have begun to write about their own version of „body-oriented psychotherapy“ by passing all the work of the body-psychotherapists in the tradition of Reich, and combining psychodynamic insights with the use of body-awareness experiences. Much as this tendency can be welcomed as an enrichment of psychoanalysis by the inclusion of basal experience before the level of language development, it avoids the use of somatic depth-psychotherapy methods, that enable the body psychotherapist for example, to work with appropriate containment of strong catharses in relation to early traumas.

14 The body-self : subjective anatomy and the two communication systems The integrative perspectives of Thure von Uexküll and his school.

The anthropological medicine of Viktor von Weiszäcker has been referred to above.

Von Weiszäcker was strongly influenced in his approach by the functional thinking of the German biologist, Jakob von Uexküll, who was a strong influence on Wilhelm Reich. His son Thure von Uexküll is one of the fathers of holistic psychosomatic medicine in Germany.

Thure von Uexküll influenced a number of leading physicians in Germany to study psychosomatic processes from within, by taking experiential courses in body-awareness, principally through attending courses by Marianne Fuchs. In their theoretical model to describe what they call „subjective anatomy“, they remain psychodynamic in their understanding, but move well outside the normal confines of psychoanalytic thinking and terminology, and begin to develop a holistic interdisciplinary language for bodymind processes, in which the traditional dualisms begin to be overcome. Much fine description is to be found in the writings of this school on the processes of translation between verbal and non verbal communication systems, which had first been referred to by Michael Balint. We could describe this school as primarily a somatic developmental form of body-psychotherapy, rather than a primarily transference-interpretational form, and in this sense they complement the discoveries and insights of the body psychotherapies, rather than replacing them or marginalizing them.

15. Back to basics: stress, splits and bridges.

The politics of Alexander Lowen and the crisis within the Bioenergetic community

In 1989 a crisis occurred within the bioenergetic community. The crisis occurred because Alexander Lowen became dissatisfied with the tendency of many of his therapists and trainers to move away from working directly with the body, and began to draw more practically and theoretically on ideas taken from ego-psychology, and modern object

relations theory. He organized an obligatory refresher course for Trainers, entitled „Back to Basics“, one of the requirements of which was that the Trainers should work with him on individual issues related to sexuality, in front of the whole group. Two senior trainers, Sandor Kirsch, and Jacques Berliner, refused to meet the requirements of the obligatory training group, and were consequently denied the title of Trainer. Subsequently these two trainers broke away from the Bioenergetic Institute and formed a new body-psychotherapy direction, which they called „Analytical body-psychotherapy“ which is discussed below. As the bioenergetic movement broke into two on the issue of how the body and mind are related, the question to be considered is whether this was a genuine split, or would it lead to the development of new bridges. This reminds me of a discussion I had with Alexander Lowen quarter of a century ago in Aspen, Colorado, when he affirmed the importance of the word „split“ as used in bioenergetic theory to describe the blockages in the body, whereas I preferred to develop the concept, crucial in biosynthesis, of bridges that are not used. The difference is the difference between a primarily medical model (the bioenergetic model) and a primarily educational model (the biosynthesis model).

16. Real body and symbolic body: energy or analysis?

The analytical body psychotherapy of Jacques Berliner, and Sandor Kirsch

Jacques Berliner and Sandor Kirsch were therapists and later trainers within the bioenergetic tradition for at least fifteen years. They had invested much energy and experience in the practices and theories of the bioenergetic movement. Their expulsion at the height of their maturity as trainers must have been both a personal and a professional shock. It was also a paradigm break, and a challenge to the identity they had built up. Their response to the challenge of “back to basics” was to build within a very short space of time a new movement called „Analytical body psychotherapy“. This movement is recognisable by the following characteristics:

- a) It is deeply critical of many of the key tenets, assumptions, and practices of Bioenergetic Analysis. This critique is well expressed in the title of Sander Kirsch’s article: “There is no analysis in bioenergetic analysis“.
- b) Expelled from bioenergetic family, the two senior trainers sought a new family and found it in those psychoanalysts who were aware of the lack of body in their classical training, and found in Berliner and Kirsch a richness of awareness of the body that they needed, and at the same time a critique of Alexander Lowen, and Wilhelm Reich, which they could support.
- c) Jacques Berliner emphasizes the importance of transference and counter transference in body psychotherapy, as Reich had done initially, and as in Berliner’s opinion had been increasingly neglected or forgotten in bioenergetics. This emphasis on the transference between patient and therapist, and the countertransference between therapist and client, is not however paralleled by awareness of the transference from student to teacher, in both its positive and negative forms. It is clear from Berliner’s description of his years within bioenergetics, that he idealized his teacher in a way that

analytically can be seen as a very strong positive transference. How else can one explain his attachment to practices and principles for 15 years, which he gave up only after his expulsion? Similarly, in the intensity and form of his later critique of Lowen, and similar critiques by those under his influence, it does not require one to be a psychoanalyst to detect a quality of bitterness, even of revengefulness, which speaks clearly to a very strong and un-worked-through negative transference on his former teacher. We are speaking of initial idealization, followed by subsequent devaluation.

d) The need was clearly experienced to develop a new set of concepts and practices to replace the now discredited ones discarded from bioenergetics. These concepts and practices can be understood as primarily a restatement of classical and modern psychoanalytical and object-relational concepts, with the inclusion of body reference, rather than by strikingly new theories about the nature of the body mind connection, or of new methodologies to work with neurotic states.

e) A tendency is found to counterpoint the „new“ analytical body-psychotherapy against the old bioenergetic analysis, derived from Lowen, and further back from Reich. In this competitive advancing of the new against the old, certain concepts such as „relationship“ are seen as typically analytical, as against other concepts such as „energy“, which are seen as typically outmoded, and discardable.. Nowhere is this tendency to take a one hundred and eighty degree turn more obvious than in the reversal of Reich's principal of functional identity and antithesis, which was a basis of his psychosomatic thinking, in a long philosophical tradition, and returning quite deliberately to dualistic thinking in which body and mind are consciously dichotomised.

f) In the fight to discredit the father (Lowen) and the grandfather (Reich), in what may seem to a psychoanalyst something resembling an oedipal revenge drama, not only are Lowen and Reich the target for discreditation, but also the brothers and sisters (ie the founders of other forms of body psychotherapy derived from Reich or earlier) are drawn implicitly into the attack, since it is tacitly assumed that most of the critique of bioenergetic analysis can be applied indiscriminately to almost all other forms of body psychotherapy. With so many competitors struck down, directly, or indirectly, there can be only one survivor: analytical body psychotherapy.

g) In its rejection and critique of what it sees, in bioenergetics, as the use of unnecessary pressure, on techniques of breaking through the armor, of pushing the client in an unbalanced ways into primitive emotionality, in the overuse of regression, and the neglect of progression, in the overactivity of the therapist's interventions, and the under-awareness of the client's emerging process, in all these ways the analytical body psychotherapists began to throw out the baby with the bathwater. The bathwater is the forms of bioenergetic methodology which are being criticised: the baby is the body. While much remains of value related to the body, and certainly much more than one finds in classical psychoanalysis, one cannot resist answering Sander Kirsch's paradoxical title („There is no analysis in bioenergetic analysis“) with the thought that there is not much real body left in analytical body-psychotherapy.

h) Jacques Berliner distinguishes well between the real body, of flesh and blood, the imaginal body of the body image, the symbolic body of verbal expression, and the transitional body signaling its needs and feelings within the relationship. However, he tends to polarize, rejecting the energetic reality of the real body, for the imaginal, verbal, and transferential aspects of the body, all of which are important. The value of interpreting what the body is doing and meaning is elevated to a cardinal principle, neglecting the insight that interpretation can also constitute a form of misuse at least as serious as the manipulations which Berliner sees in bioenergetics.

More serious still is the belief, shared with the analysts, that symbolic life is possible only through words, thus denying the non-verbal symbolism in a dance performance, or in the non-verbal communications systems which are the basis of our human existence, in the crucial attunement systems in the infant-parent bonding, in love making, in the somatic resonances between therapist and client.

The mistake is to split the „real body“ the body of movements, the body that can vibrate, and pulsate, the body activated by the now discredited energy of emotionality, the body that breathes,-- from the speaking, imaging and relating body, a mistake as serious as the mistake these critics see in bioenergetics, in over-emphasising the external body at the expense of the internal body.

i) One can say that bioenergetics can be enriched by listening to the critique of some of its theoretical and practical weaknesses, and that psychoanalysis has been enriched by the addition of the experience gained within bioenergetics and applied differently by the renegades from the bioenergetic community. To imply as the writers in this school do that the new analytical body psychotherapy is the only serious form of body psychotherapy, and that all other forms are to be discredited on the basis of their critique of bioenergetics, is not only insulting to other forms of body-psychotherapy, but reveals the ignorance of these authors of other body psychotherapy methods and principles, once they step outside the framework of the limited bioenergetic analysis that they left behind them, and the new analytical landscape that they are now colonizing.

17, Body and word: connecting feeling, movement and insight Integrative body-psychotherapy after George Downing

In 1996 the long awaited book by George Downing, “The Body and Word”, was published in German and Italian. George Downing is a clinical psychologist, with a training in object relations theory, and a deep knowledge of the body acquired through his background in bioenergetics, and in particular with Stanley Keleman’s somatic process methods.

Whereas the analytical body psychotherapists, in the tradition of Berliner, are in danger in my opinion of over-interpreting the body, and of a failure to develop alternative methods of direct engagement with the body, to replace the methods they rejected within bioenergetics, Downing is always keeping an appropriate balance between analytical methods based on language, and somatic interventions where he works directly with the non verbal communications systems of the body. Downing understands better than most the richness of the affecto-motoric schemas in infancy, and

their relevance in therapy. He is aware of subtleties in breathing rhythms, and nuances in motoric expression. He is not afraid to use his hands, and to induce latent patterns of intentionality, or to re-educate and reorganize the body to the acceptance of new experiences and new forms of embodiment. He writes with great clarity and differentiation about qualities of support, and when and how they are helpful, and when and how they are not. He can distinguish between macro and micro expression, without valuing one at the expense of the other. He is process oriented. Downing forms an excellent bridge between the world of body psychotherapy, and the world of object relations, because he seems comfortable in both worlds, a man at home in his body, and a man with no fear to use his head as an organ of differentiation and precision. He integrates body and mind, rather than setting one off against the other, which is the tendency in the polarization between bioenergetics with too little analysis, and analytical body-psychotherapy with too little body.

Part II: Biosynthesis as a Somatic Psychotherapy

Presentation at the Common Ground Conference of the European Association for Psychotherapy, Rome, June 1997

1.The formative principle, life streams, and the three modalities of therapeutic work.

Biosynthesis means integration of life. This term was first used in a psychotherapeutic context by Francis Mott, an English configurational psychologist, half a century ago. Mott was working with body-imagery, in a tradition going back to Paul Schilder, at the University of Vienna, in the early nineteen twenties. Schilder's work was partially inspired by the groundbreaking work of Pierre Janet, at the Salpêtrière Hospital, in Paris, in the last decades of the previous century.

Pierre Janet was the grandfather of our approach. His psycho-physical insights into the relationship between emotionality, breathing, and movement established the bases of body-psychotherapy, forty years before the work of Wilhelm Reich. Janet focused, like Francis Mott after him, on the formative processes of embryogenesis as laying down the deepest roots of our psycho-physical existence. For the past third of a century I have been deepening and developing these insights, and have developed a special form of body psychotherapy which I call „biosynthesis“.

In biosynthesis a crucial concept is that of three life streams of affect which are called uterine affect, foetal skin affect, and kinaesthetic affect, which are closely related to the three germ layers in the developing embryo. These affect streams in postnatal life are closely related to specific morphological regions of the body, and to the three fundamental processes of emotionality, motility and perception. When we are working with the reconnection of these three areas of our experience and expression, we have

developed three principal therapeutic modalities, which I call „centering“, „grounding „, and „facing“. Centering is related to the rebalancing of breathing ,and to finding a more centered position between emotional acting out (hysteria) and emotional apathy (the affect block, or the schizoid position). Grounding is related to the rebalancing of muscle tone between the extremes of hypotonus related to resignation and collapse, and hypertonus related to strain and stress. Facing is related to the balancing of perceptions between the over-focused position (tunnel vision) and the under-focused position (scatter-vision).

2. Energy ,contact and world view: affect, and the spectrum of life-fields

In biosynthesis we work with energetic liveliness, in the form of emotional expression and the unfolding of movement possibilities. Potential energy stored up in emotional stasis, or in muscular contractions, is liberated into the kinetic energy of inner and outer connectedness.

This energetic work is never a question to be measured in quantities of expressiveness, but in terms of the quality of expressiveness, in other words in terms of contact.

.. The emphasis on contact in Biosynthesis is an emphasis on the nuances of the relationship in the bipersonal field between therapist and patient. As in all psychodynamic therapies there is an awareness of transference and countertransference as basic tools among others, but this awareness of the transference is deepened and broadened by the inclusion of the non verbal components. We speak ,with Jacob Stattman ,of organic presence, with Stanley Keleman of somatic resonance and with Wilhelm Reich of vegetative identification as different aspects of the shared embodiment between the two human beings in the therapy room.

A person's world view include his belief systems, character attitudes, expectations, thought patterns, and memories, which include both historical events and constructions of experience. World views are partly an expression of character structure, which can be understood as our frozen history, physiologically rooted in breathing patterns, and movement restrictions.

The therapist in biosynthesis works to create bridges between energetic connection, between relational contacts, and between the context of a person's world views, so as to overcome the disconnections induced by neurosis.

A person's experience and expression can be understood as a spectrum of life-fields, containing physical, energetic, emotional, relational, cognitive, imaginal, and spiritual components. Some of these components have been identified in affect-theory as aspects of an integrated human expression. The concept of life fields has also been developed in body-image research to express the multi-dimensionality of human experience. In infant research a similar understanding is shown in the concept of the „affecto-motoric-scheme“ (Downing) which unites emotional motoric and cognitive aspects in a three-fold concept.

3. Shape flow and postures of the soul: regression, progression and affecto-motor schemas.

In biosynthesis we work with specific patterns of movement intentionality, such as flexion and extension, traction and opposition. These patterns have a number of function: firstly they are deeply involved with developmental sequences such as are found in prenatal life, during birth, in early postnatal steps such as crawling and standing, and in the somatic developmental psychology of ego formation. The motoric fields, as we call them, also form a basic movement vocabulary which is part of our legacy as primates, but when the movement patterns become onesided or overexaggerated, we have the somatic basis of fixated character attitudes, shrinking away from the world, over-extending into it, pushing it away in a paranoid spirit, or manipulating it according to ego-compulsions. Motoric fields in their restricted forms are frozen movement patterns: neurosis can be defined, according to Henri Laborit, following Janet, as the inhibition of action, and therapy can be defined, at least in part, as the mobilizing of the possibilities for appropriate action.

In working with the body, as Darwin pointed out over a hundred and twenty years ago, changes of posture can release buried feelings, or evoke new ones, just as strong emotional states can fixate postures. The biosynthesis therapist is trained how to work with benign regression, as Michael Balint called it, and to avoid malign regression. The function of regression as we understand it is not to relive trauma for its own sake, but to return to a time in a person's life when traumatic experiences occurred and discover the healthy responses to the trauma that could not be activated at the time. In this sense the therapeutic goal in regression is to make possible a new progression, unfolding missing links in the developmental sequence, and freeing blocked energies that were deactivated by the traumatic experience.

Studies of the affecto-motoric-schemas in infancy have shown that the capacity to respond in a healthy way to appropriate life events is biologically provided, but negative life events will not actualize these healthy response patterns, but will elicit distorted motoric fields which are adaptive to the sick environment, but maladaptive to a healthy environment. The original affecto motoric schemas are neither destroyed, nor lost, but remain as a potential which can be reactivated and returned to full usage in therapeutic work in biosynthesis.

4. Strategies of stress reduction: trauma , stress, and the holding environment

An example of this process can be seen in a case example involving a schizophrenic woman. The schizophrenia developed in the context of many double bind situations and negative emotional pressures during infancy. The contactlessness this woman experienced became reflected in her own contactlessness. (Reich) She avoided all eye contact with other persons, and her muscle tone was a mixture of tremendous hypotonia on the surface, and extreme tension beneath the surface. She suffered hallucinations, heard voices, felt persecuted, and oscillated between extreme acting out on the social environment and extreme acting-in to a rather closed autistic world. In the course of therapeutic work over several years she made considerable progress out of this

disturbed state, and gradually resumed her foothold in the world, beginning studies, and starting a relationship. Her dormant capacity for health was being reactivated by her therapist. Finally she conceived a child, and those who knew her feared a relapse, as it is well known that the stress of bringing up a baby can decompensate a post-psychotic person. She did not decompensate, nor did she repeat the contactlessness that she had experienced in her own infancy, and repeated in her previous body structure and character structure. She conceived a second child, and is now the mother of two healthy infants, with shining eyes, vital bodies, and healthy contactfulness. Such an evolution in a previously very disturbed woman, stimulates our faith in the possibilities of reawakening healthy motility and healthy emotionality, of the re-emergence of long dormant and previously unused affecto-motoric-schemas, the adaptive life patterns

Many years ago Donald Winnicott emphasised the importance of the holding environment, and introduced the term „grounding into the body“ for the need to regain our somatic roots.

5. Channels of contact and elements of touch: soma semantics and the two tracks of transference and transmission (6 contact channels)

In biosynthesis we are working with two communication systems, in dialogue with each other, verbal communication and non verbal communication. Communication without words was the theme of a conference at the British Psychological Society thirty years ago, and the World Council for Psychotherapy has accepted a working party on this theme, which I am presiding over. I call this theme the theme of „Soma semantics“, the meanings of the body. It is a huge area of interdisciplinary study involving ethology, infant research, dance choreography, psychosomatic medicine, and the hermeneutics of intentionality. In biosynthesis we work with four separate but related channels of contact, between therapist and patient:

- the channel of sound, which includes not only language but all the para-linguistic aspects of voice tone and rhythm,
- the channel of eye-contact and gaze, which is a whole research field in its own right,
- the channel of contact through the legs to the ground, and the support system and postural basis we adopt
- the channel of contact through the hands

Appropriate touch, with respect for the patient's boundaries, and with the holding of the spirit of the abstinence rule, namely that what takes place in the session is for the benefit of the client and not for the satisfaction of the therapist's needs, is a basic human need, and has been part of psychotherapy for two hundred and twenty years, ever since Mesmer worked with his hands to affect energy flow in the body of patients, Johann Reil worked with revitalizing muscle tone, and Pierre Janet and Georg Groddeck both worked with massage to release breathing, and free blocked movement. In biosynthesis we work

with four principal elements of touch related to the exchange of messages around support and stability, freeing blocked impulses, connecting to organic rhythms of breathing, or providing reassurance and security.

Our trainees need to learn how to move between the verbal and non verbal communication systems, translating not only what the client says within each system, but also translating between systems. Michael Balint wrote on the need for this translation between systems, which Thure von Uexküll calls a form of „semiosis“, signalling between signal systems. This is essential to provide the reintegration of head and body that is frequently interrupted by the double bind situations which neurotic states often contain at their core.

6. Essential qualities and spiritual grounding: actualizing potential and developing resources.

In biosynthesis we see the person as more than their conditioning. We understand that the person comes into the world with qualities waiting to be actualized, discovered as well as developed. These qualities are part of our evolutionary potential as human beings, and are connected to the capacity to feel from the heart, which is restricted and defended against in neurotic character states. This connection to the heart is the goal of all spiritual paths, but much mystification and deformation has occurred on many of these paths, so that spiritual grounding is related to the connection between being centered in the heart, and being able to focus on the everyday tasks of the day, be present within the complexities of human relationships and responsibilities, and be embodied on the planet, as a social, sexual, and spiritual being.

In our therapeutic work it is easy for the therapist to be overwhelmed by the gravity of the client's problems, and to feel depressed by the enormity of the task before him. The more massive the problem the more vital it is that the therapist is focused not only on the problem, but on latent or dormant resources, within the client, or outside him/her, waiting to be actualized. These resources may come from non traumatic islands in childhood, from a new contact to a part of the body, from a new perception within a relationship, or from contact to nature in a way that can symbolize renewal, hope, or the possibility of transformative re-embodiment. Learning how to contact these resources, and deepen the contact to essential qualities is a central task in biosynthesis therapy.

Part III: Body-strategies: Modes of Interaction and Strategies of Intervention

1. Time

This category of interaction relates to questions like when, how fast, and who goes first-

1.1 Quick and Slow.

Rhythms of speaking and moving may be symmetric with each other or asymmetric. A depressive client will tend to move and speak slowly, an excitable client will do the opposite. The therapist can use the element of time to first blend with and then invite a client into a different rhythm. A good example is given in the work of Dr. Nic Waal with an autistic child, where she begins excitedly jumping in his rhythm, and then slowly leads him into a slower rhythm, in which more contact is possible

1.2 Following and leading.

Attention can be paid to who initiates interactions, the therapist or the client. Wilhelm Reich criticized the waiting game when both therapist and client waited for the other to begin. If a client leads creatively from her own process, the therapist can follow and support. If the client is stuck in repetition patterns, he needs constructive initiatives from the therapist. In biosynthesis we distinguish five major patterns of interaction, which are called:

- a) Therapist active, client reactive
- b) Therapist active, client responsive
- c) Therapist and client interactive
- d) Client active, therapist responsive
- e) Client active, therapist permissive.

Therapeutic sensibility requires the ability to move between all five of these positions, according to their assessment of the helpfulness of each mode

1.3 Simultaneity and succession.

Language interchanges are primarily successive, one after the other, although in some cultures, for example Italy, many examples of two people speaking at the same time are found. Non verbal communication can be either simultaneous, or successive, as is observed in studies of gaze and body rhythms between mother and infant.

1.4 Past present or future

The client enters the room in the present, and work on his historical traumas may lead him into a regression, when he is emotionally in the past. We can distinguish, with Michael Balint, benign regression, which is helpful to the client, and malignant regression, which is a form of acting out. Work with the past, regression, is for the purpose of

creating a new future, progression. In French this is called „reculer pour mieux sauter“. Work on the past needs integrating in the present. Regressive work needs to be balanced not only with progressive work,(future pacing), but with work on the motoric possibilities in the here and now to mobilize the body in new ways preparing a person to move forwards in their life, without which progression is not possible. The here and now work on the body structure seeks to liberate constructive aggression, which was bound in the neurotic patterns. By aggression is here meant, not anger, but the capacity to expand, and move forwards without neurotic restriction, from the Latin „a-gredo“, I advance.

2. Space

The interactions are linked to the question where, and to the use of placing, and orientation in the room.

2.1 Near and far.

Nearness and distance are crucial aspects of boundary management, which are different in different cultures, and for different character patterns. The therapist can regulate the proximity field either by positioning himself (therapist active) at a distance he senses as appropriate between him and the client, or by asking the client to position himself (client active) in what he feels to be the appropriate distance. In Biosynthesis we distinguish three primary proximity fields, which we call „in touch“, where there is some form of physical contact, „in reach“, where physical contact is possible, for example by reaching out, without major change of position in the room, and „out of reach“ when physical contact is possible only with a change of room position.

2.2 High and low.

Height can convey status, but the sitting position can establish territory, as Desmond Morris has commented on in the example of a policeman who feels inferior when he gives a parking ticket to a motorist who remains seated. What are the possibilities for working with levels in the therapy room. Both client and therapist may sit on chairs. Therapist may sit, and client may lie, on couch, or mattress. Both may sit on the floor. Client can stand during some grounding exercise and therapist can sit. Many other variations can be found, but the transferential, characterological, and interpersonal aspects of the body levels in the room is always important to be aware of and explore.

2.3 Orientation.

What is the placement in the room? Is the client safest in the corner, or must he sit on a chair in the middle of the room. Is he claustrophobic near the walls, or agoraphobic away from them. Room position establishes territory, dominant or recessive, for both client and therapist, and how territories are placed in relation to each other can have important psychodynamic meanings that are valuable to take notice of as part of the field of interactions.

2.4 Body shape

What messages are conveyed by body shape, and are the shapes primarily symmetric, client and therapist both sitting hunched up on their chairs, with their legs crossed, or primarily asymmetric? How much asymmetry can the client tolerate in the therapist's body position, before he begins to experience the therapist as an alien?

Further aspects of body-shape are discussed in the section on motoric fields, below

3. Energy .

These interactions are concerned with questions like „How much?“, What is the quantity of energy, force, pressure, expression? Is it too much or too little? Should we seek to increase it or decrease it?

3.1 Hard or soft.

Edward Smith, in his book on Body Psychotherapy, has a whole chapter on hard techniques and soft techniques. Hard techniques are associated with classical bioenergetic therapy, where a rationale is given for „breaking through the armour“ by pressure on tense muscles, or by strenuous stress exercises where the client learns to endure pain in order to stretch open contracted muscles. Such techniques are not used in Biosynthesis, and have been criticized from within the bioenergetic movement by Peter Geissler, and others. Malcolm Brown has distinguished cathartic and nurturing touch. It is possible, when felt necessary and helpful, to induce cathartic responses, without the use of hard touch. On the other hand over-soft touch may for some clients be counter-indicated, as it can reduce boundaries in people whose boundaries may already be too low. Biosynthesis has developed the concept of elements of touch, which is discussed below. The important thing is to get continuous feedback from the client as to the quality of contact the therapist offers. A basic principle is never to give more pressure to a client than he is able to put out, and this is particularly important in work with physical resistance, and aggression-mobilising work

3.2 Micro or macro

George Downing has described the importance of micro expression..

A basic principle is that energy is less important than contact. Strong energy expression is possible with no contact at all. Contact however, will tend to establish its own appropriate energetic level. In biosynthesis we speak of totalizing when we try to help a client to involve more of himself in a therapeutic process, and de-totalizing, when we try to get him to focus on one element of his experience or body, and to concentrate on this

3.3 Bound or Free:

Energy can be latent or manifest, in potential or kinetic states.

A major polarity in expressive therapies, is how much is it helpful to express, and how much is it helpful to contain. Too much expression of an inappropriate kind, and we have the phenomenon of acting out, or the display of emotion as what in transactional analysis is called a „racket“. Too little expression of appropriate emotion, and we have the problem of acting in, the affect block, suppression and repression, instead of helpful

containment. The therapist needs to assess the client's position on the spectrum of containment and release, bound or free energy, and to help him to find the freedom to explore both poles appropriately according to context.

4. Fields

We are dealing with life fields of experience and expressions. The question is at which level or dimension of the person's life we are conducting our therapeutic work. George Downing distinguishes five primary levels, which he calls motoric, sensational, emotional, cognitive and imaginal. Jacques Berliner distinguishes between the real body of flesh and blood, transitional body of relationship, the symbolic body of verbal expression and thought processes, and the imaginal body which he links with the body image. In Biosynthesis we work with seven life fields of expression and experience, which include the levels and bodies of Downing and Berliner, and another besides. The seven fields are the motoric,(4.1), the vital-sensational,(4.2),the emotional-expressive,(4.3), the interpersonal-relational (4.4),the verbal-cognitive,(4.5), the imaginal (4.6), and the essential-spiritual (4.7). These seven life fields were described in more detail in my mainlecture at the 1st World Congress for Psychotherapy in July 1996, on "Embodiment in the therapeutic relationship", published in the International Journal of Psychotherapy, Vol 2, no 1, May 1997.

George Downing has described the importance of connecting these levels, and in biosynthesis we work with the principle of entering at the best known and most easily accessible level and, from there, seeking to open up contact to the other fields of experience and expression.

5. Channels

. We are dealing here with the principle channels of contact between therapist and client, both verbal and non-verbal, and with the how of communication.

5.1 Eye contact:

The importance of eye contact has been recognized in studies of infant-parent bonding situations, where gaze interactions have been studied in great detail. Daniel Stern has emphasized the importance of correct attunement and the harmful effects of mis-attunement. In relation to the eyes a child may be deprived by too little eye contact, where he feels the mother to be absent in her eyes, and has the experience of feeling unseen, or he can be invaded by eye contact that is over-penetrating, or full of projections, so that the experience is one of being mis-seen. The importance of working with eye contact has been rediscovered in the past two years within behaviorism, in the technique of Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing, -- a principle which had been discovered and used by Wilhelm Reich half a century earlier. Reich had used eye contact experiences with great effectiveness in his handling of schizophrenics, where the „far away“ look is a typical expression reflecting an acute eye-block.

The Principle of mirroring. In Biosynthesis we have an awareness of three kind of mirroring processes: the distorting mirror, which we seek to avoid, or to own as an empathic failure, and then seek to improve; the reflecting mirror, which can be used to mirror aspects of the client's body posture or character, and aspects of his deeper self; and thirdly the inviting mirror, in which we initiate a movement, or expression, or a quality which is latent but not yet manifest, in order to encourage it into the open.

5.2 Touch :

Touch was used by Janet, Groddeck, Freud in his early days, Ferenczi, Winnicott, Balint, Reich, and is an accepted principle in body psychotherapy. Through touch the therapist establishes proprioceptive and kinaesthetic contact with the client, and has an additional rich range of diagnostic and therapeutic modalities at his disposal. The ethics of touch are the same as in other therapies using touch, and abstinence is interpreted as the principle that what happens in the therapy is for the therapeutic benefit of the client, and not for the acting out of any need on the part of the therapist and within a relationship which is defined as in principle asymmetric. Touch is only given with a client's permission, and when in the therapist's opinion it is therapeutically helpful.

Parts of the body and touch: the sexual areas of the body, genitals, and breasts, are excluded from touch. Other areas of the body are open to touch subject to the conditions above. The therapist learns to distinguish differences in transferential aspects of touch in relation to the front and back of the body, the distal and proximal areas of the limbs, the extremities versus the trunk of the body.

Elements of touch: in biosynthesis we distinguish the following elements of touch:

- a) Earth touch, bringing support, containment a sense of boundary, and reinforcing the solidity of the body
- b) Water touch: vitalising, mobilising and loosening, so as to improve circulation and flexibility and surrender
- c) Air touch: promoting rhythm, and connecting breathing to movement. Here is a major modality for working with breathing. Breath interventions are too complex to discuss here, but the depth of the work with breathing is indicated in the articles by myself and Andreas Wehowsky.
- d) Fire touch: offering warmth, contact, and a sense of feeling nourished and accepted.
- e) Wood touch: touch inducing latent growth impulses, and contacting patterns of motoric intentionality, and helping these to unfold.

In the use of touch the therapist can be inducing new movements, or educating latent movements. Induction and education are basic, in place of seduction (leading a person into an activity against their own real needs) or production (leading a person to fulfill the

ambitions of the other). Touch can be used to release old patterns of expression which have been repressed or to reorganize and repattern old expressions, until new forms are learned which help the client out of the repetition compulsions of his neurosis.

Throughout this work with touch the therapist is aware of the primary patterns of movement intentionality shown by a client („motoric fields“), and his knowledge of how to work with these creatively.

George Downing has an excellent description of different kinds of support which he characterizes in detail: accompaniment support and counter-response support with four subcomponents which he calls anonymous-hand-support, back-ground support, boundary support, and ping-pong support with different qualities which he explains in his book.

5.3. Working with the body through language.

The client can be helped by appropriate questions, or invited experiences, into an enhanced or altered body awareness. Body awareness is the basis of our body image, and body awareness itself depends in part on body-usage, so that the body image is resting on a body schema which reflects the state of our motoric system, and in particular the gamma nervous system activation of the musculature. Body awareness can be of outer sounds and sights, (ectodermal), of the muscle sense and body position (mesodermal), or of internal rhythms of breathing and emotionality (endodermal). Working with body awareness of the last two kinds is called by George Downing „internal technique“. In the martial arts there is also a distinction between internal technique, linked to awareness, and external technique, linked to athletic movements. Both principles apply in biosynthesis, and internal and external techniques are intended to support each other.

The therapist can suggest appropriate activities for a client using words, he can invite latent intentions using words, he can reflect current holding patterns using words, he can invite new attitudes using words, he can comment on his transference understanding and feeling for the embodiment of the client using words, and he can report on his own somatic reactions in the countertransference using words.

Moreover, the therapist can help the client to find words for his somatic states, thus translating between verbal and non verbal, and can offer his own words as a formulation of his awareness of the client's somatic presence. This is different from body reading, which can be too objectifying for the client, but a form of body sensing, which is expressed subjectively, leaving the client space to share his own, possibly very different, impressions, images and insights

5.4 Working with language on language

In biosynthesis we have a concept of the motoric fields of language, that the way a person speaks sets up interpersonal vector fields that resemble the motoric fields of non verbal communication.

Language can be also characterised , following Grove and Panzer, as adapted by Wehowsky, into three primary forms:

- ectodermal language: dealing with belief systems, attitudes, evaluations, and semantics and with processes of explication, and with exploratory metaphoric or symbolic imagery for internal and external experience
- meosdermal language: dealing with explanatory reportage of events, and narrative description
- endodermal language: dealing with the expression of emotionality

The subjects of language include the language of connection, how a patient experiences his own bodily states, which refers us back to section 5.3. The language of contact, which opens up the whole field of the relationship, and of contact elaborations. There is a whole discussion in George Downing's book on various ways to work with the transference and countertransference, and this is extended in the writings of Maarten Aalberse (Unitive Psychotherapy). It is important that the therapist know when interpretation is helpful, and when it is an invasion of the client. That he recognizes that interpretation is only one way of using explicatory language, and that he recognizes that not all contact experiences between therapist and client are reducible to the re-enactment of historical patterns. In the potential space (Winnicott) of the bipersonal field (Langs), there needs to be space for the real relationship, still asymmetric, to grow, which provides the healthy bonding possibilities that were avoided, or distorted, during development. All research shows that it is the therapeutic relationship which heals.

6. Processes and Polarities.

The focus of the interreaction is: who is in front of me?

A basic principle in biosynthesis is that one person's meat is another person's poison. What is good for one client, is counter-indicated for the next. This highlights the importance of correct diagnosis: In biosynthesis there is an elaborate diagnostic tool developed in the form of the Structure Process and Dynamic Character Cube. The diagnosis is not only an assessment of the client's problems, but also of his resources and qualities. The character cube has three axes:

- a). A structure axis describing nine life stations, or levels of ego development and self-formation, each with associated possible pathologies of structure.
- b). A process axis dealing with four basic dimensions of character, subdivided into twenty four sub dimensions of character
- c) A dynamic axis dealing with somatodiagnosis, relational patterns, defensive styles and cognitive styles, imaginal patterns, and qualities and resources.

The therapist tries to relate his interventions to the specific needs , stages, and life-forms of his client.

7. Choices

At this level of reflection the basic question is “ Why ?, What is the motive of the intervention? We can distinguish a number of distinct intentionality’s in our work. I summarize a few of these below, the list is not definitive, and other intentionality’s can be envisaged, and the categories below could be subdivided into sub categories, as has happened in the description of Peter Geissler.

7.,1 Body as experiential ground: creating new experiences

Many neurotic problems grow on the basis not only of conflicts, but of deprivations, so that key learning steps in infancy are neglected or distorted. The basis of ego development is laid down in somatic developmental psychology, and somatic emotional patterns can be learned, or relearned on the basis of new embodiments of experience during therapeutic work. This aspect is essential for therapeutic recovery from traumatic experience, where as Laborit has shown, action was inhibited, and as Levine has demonstrated, somatic experiencing was distorted.

7.2 Body as affective ground. Working through defences and resistances

Emotionality always involved the body, since it is mediated by means of the vegetative nervous system. Defences are defences in part against the experiencing of connected affect, and resistance is built on the fear of recontacting the intensity of repressed emotionally charged experiences. The therapist, working with the spectrum of containment and release, learns when it is helpful for a patient to relive emotionally charged experiences, and when it is helpful to work more in the direction of encouraging vitality affects in order to build up trust in the body as a ground for non fragmenting experience.

7.3 Body as relational ground: transference relationship versus real relationship

Relationship is embodied, since both client and therapist bring their bodies with them into the therapy room. George Downing has discussed the differences between the verbal and the non verbal transference. Through the non verbal transference it is possible to contact earlier levels of the client's relational history, and also through non verbal transmission to supply new relational experiences of trust in the client’s own body and the body of the other.

7.4 Body as ground of communication and speech

Daniel Stern has described four primary senses of the self, three of which are non verbal, and one of which is verbal. The verbal sense of self rests on the underlying triad of non verbal selves, and needs to be connected to these if speech is to be an embodied communication, and not an abstract intellectualization, deprived of affect, as in the schizoid process. The therapist works with the two way translation process between body and word, and between word and body. So as to connect experience and its verbal expressions.

7.5 Body as postures of the soul: subtle body and essential self.

The physical body, made of palpable flesh and bone, is linked to an energetic body of bioelectric and vegetative currents, bio-magnetic fields, thermal infra redwaves, and bio-photon radiation. Affective and cognitive information fields interpenetrate the organism. In addition there is a field of values that we generate and inhabit, which are part of our potential for manifestation. This relates to the spiritual essence of the person, which is validated within every psychotherapeutic system, as I showed in my article *Essence and Ground*, which has become a key document in the working party on *Psychotherapy and Spirituality*, for the European Association of Psychotherapy. In biosynthesis, we work with principles of inspiration and embodiment, the connecting of values and qualities to our incarnation in this body and in this existence. Thus as Howard Wilkinson, the editor of the *International Journal of Psychotherapy* expressed it, biosynthesis works with the evocation of „a spirituality expressed through the full realizational awareness of the body.“(*Int.J.Psychotherapy*, 2.,1,May 1997). How this is done is described in my forthcoming article “*Spiritual grounding in Biosynthesis*“ and in a further article planned on „*Resources in Therapy*“

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